EXPANDING NUCLEAR MEDICINE SERVICES THROUGH TELELINKING

(RAF/6/023) E1 New

MODEL PROJECT

CORE FINANCING

YEAR	Experts		Group Activity	Equipment	Fellowships		Scientific Visits		Group Training	Sub-Contracts	Misc. Comp.	TOTAL
	m/d	US $	US $	US $	m/d	US $	m/d	US $	US $	US $	US $	US $
1999	0/21	10,290	0	102,500	0/0	0	0/0	0	0	0	0	112,790
2000	0/15	7,725	0	20,000	3/0	10,800	0/0	0	0	0	0	38,525

First Year Approved: 1999

OBJECTIVES: To upgrade the nuclear medicine capacity of the University Teaching Hospital, Lusaka, Zambia through a permanent Internet link with the Groote Schuur Hospital, South Africa for medical image transfer and remote consultations.

BACKGROUND: Through Agency assistance, a Nuclear Medicine Department was established at the University Teaching Hospital, Lusaka, in the mid-1970s. Since 1995, the Agency has been providing support under TC Project ZAM/6/007 to develop the nuclear medicine capability and to introduce in-vivo medical investigations using a gamma camera. Significant progress has been achieved by the counterparts in making optimal use of the assistance and providing adequate diagnostic services. However, the Nuclear Medicine Department still lacks experience and sufficient expertise to deal with all cases referred to the hospital whereas the Department of Nuclear Medicine at Groote Schuur Hospital has well equipped diagnostic facilities and qualified, experienced staff. Three Zambian doctors have been trained in South Africa as part of Agency supported efforts to upgrade the Lusaka hospital's capabilities. This Model Project will promote further TCDC between South Africa and Zambia by establishing a telenuclear link between the two institutions to enhance the quality of diagnosis and expand nuclear medicine services in Zambia, particularly through the use of Ga-67 pharmaceuticals. Under Phase II of the project, consideration will be given to extending the telelink to other countries in the subregion, such as Namibia and Zimbabwe.

PROJECT PLAN: Project activities will include procurement and installation of telenuclear medicine equipment at the two co-operating institutions and provision of expert services to conduct on-the-job training for Zambian practitioners in the use of Ga-67 pharmaceuticals for scintigraphy investigations in infection and inflammation imaging and nuclear oncology. Fellowship training abroad will also be arranged. Through an Internet link, fast communication and consultation between Zambian and South African specialists will be maintained. Special emphasis will be placed on improving the standard of nuclear medicine practice to meet QA requirements.

NATIONAL COMMITMENT: The Governments of South Africa and Zambia have expressed their readiness to co-operate through this project and will provide their respective institutions with the staff, infrastructure and resources required.

AGENCY INPUT: The Agency will provide telenuclear medicine equipment, expert advice to Zambia on expanding nuclear medicine investigations; training.

PROJECT IMPACT: The project outputs will lead to upgrading the practice of nuclear medicine at the Lusaka University Teaching Hospital. It will enable the counterparts to optimize the use of the facilities established through previous Agency assistance and to expand the scope of diagnostic services, particularly in endocrinology, neurology, paediatrics, haematology and cardiology through the introduction of new procedures. The envisaged binational co-operation will lead to better quality nuclear medicine investigations and improved maintenance of equipment. The provision of timely and accurate diagnosis and diversification of clinical investigations will lead to savings in the health care budget because patients will no longer be referred to medical institutions abroad for examination.